

## **Measles Vaccine and Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) FACT SHEET**

### **Key Messages**

- Measles vaccine is given in combination with mumps and rubella (German measles) vaccines. Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine protects children against three diseases with just one shot.
- Scientific studies have found no relationship between measles vaccine and inflammatory bowel disease.
- The CDC recommends two doses of MMR vaccine for all children.

### **Facts**

- Inflammatory Bowel Disease, or IBD, refers to diseases (including ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease) that inflame the intestines and cause symptoms such as bloody diarrhea, pain, and weight loss. The cause(s) of IBD is not known.
- Studies conducted since 1998 by one group of researchers suggest that MMR vaccine may cause IBD. However, other scientists have concerns about the way these studies were done. For example, in one study researchers found parts of measles virus in the intestines of children with IBD. However, they did not compare the virus found in the children with the virus used in the MMR vaccine, nor did they provide information to indicate whether or not the children had ever received the MMR vaccine or had ever gotten measles disease.
- Other scientists have done studies that provide strong scientific evidence that there is no association between measles vaccine and IBD. For instance, the CDC compared the vaccination histories of patients with IBD to those without IBD. The scientists found that vaccination with MMR does not increase the likelihood that a person will develop IBD.
- Measles is a dangerous, even deadly, disease. One out of 30 children with measles gets pneumonia. For every 1,000 children who get measles, one or two will die from the disease. MMR vaccine protects children against measles.
- The CDC recommends that children get two doses of MMR vaccine, the first at 12-15 months of age and the second at 4-6 years of age. This recommendation is supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians.

### **For more information**

For more in-depth information on Measles Vaccine and IBD, go to  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nip/vacsafe/concerns/autism/ibd.htm>

### **National Immunization Hotline:**

English (800) 232-2522

Spanish (800) 232-0233